

# Plasticizer

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**Plasticizers** or *Dispersants* are additives that increase the [plasticity](#) or [fluidity](#) of the material to which they are added, these include plastics, cement, concrete, wallboard and clay bodies. Although the same compounds are often used for both plastics and concretes, the desired effect is slightly different. In 2004, the worldwide market for plasticizers had a total volume of around 5.5 million tons, which led to a turnover of about 7 billion Euro.

Plasticizers for [concrete](#) soften the mix before it hardens, increasing its [workability](#) or reducing water, and are usually not intended to affect the properties of the final product after it hardens.

Plasticizers for [wallboard](#) increase fluidity of the mix, allowing lower use of water and thus reducing energy to dry the board.

The plasticizers for [plastics](#) soften the final product increasing its flexibility.